

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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In Reply Refer To:  
8342 / 8321 (CO-931) P

February 9, 2007

EMS TRANSMISSION 02/12/2007  
Instruction Memorandum No. CO-2007-020  
Expires: 09/30/2008

To: All Field Managers  
Attn: Outdoor Recreation Planners, Land Use Planners

From: State Director

Subject: Comprehensive Travel Management Planning and OHV Designations

**Program Area:** Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) and Land Use Plans.

**Purpose:** Establishing Colorado BLM instructions regarding comprehensive travel management and OHV area and route designations.

**Background:** Comprehensive Travel Management is the proactive planning and on-the-ground management of road and trail travel networks. This includes route planning, inventory and evaluation, innovative partnerships, user education, mapping, monitoring, signing, field presence and law enforcement. It addresses all resource aspects (recreational, traditional, casual, agricultural, industrial, educational, cultural, etc.) and accompanying modes and conditions of travel on the public lands, including motorized, mechanized, and non-motorized/mechanized uses.

Implementing Colorado Comprehensive Travel Management throughout the state has been a high priority for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In establishing designated road and trail networks through the planning process, field offices are able to manage all modes of travel on public lands. A well-designed travel system can direct use away from sensitive areas, yet provide quality recreational activities and access for commercial, administrative and recreational needs.

Several Colorado BLM field offices are in the process of either revising their Resource Management Plan (RMP) or are scheduled to begin revisions within the next few years. Scoping has consistently identified comprehensive travel management as a major issue to be addressed in these land use plans.

Both Executive Order 11644 and the Code of Federal Regulations (43 CFR Part 8340) require BLM to designate all public lands as Open, Closed or Limited for Off Highway Vehicle use. These designations are made in RMPs and in plan amendments. For areas in the Limited and Open categories, managers may impose several different kinds of limitations including vehicle numbers, types, use times or seasons, permitted use, existing routes, designated routes, and other limitations necessary to meet management objectives.

Nationally, BLM is moving towards a system of limiting use to designated roads, primitive roads and trails/areas and not encouraging extensive cross-country travel by motorized and mechanized vehicles. Current planning guidance (H-1601-1, Land Use Planning Handbook – Appendix C, Section D, attachment 2) requires identifying a defined travel management network system of areas, roads, primitive roads and trails, in all Land Use Plans. It is our expectation that each RMP Record of Decision will include a system of designated routes for those areas in the limited category. Designations that are limited to existing should be used only as an interim measure prior to your next scheduled RMP revision. Field Managers may elect to add other additional limitations as necessary to achieve management objectives.

While flexibility to accommodate local circumstances is needed, there needs to be a consistent approach to route selection and adherence to the regulation in 43 CFR 8342.1 (attachment 1).

**Policy/Action:** Colorado BLM will manage access on the public lands in accordance with existing law, executive orders, proclamation, regulation, and policy. Within this context:

- Comprehensive Travel Management planning will address all modes of travel/access (recreational, traditional, casual, agricultural, industrial, educational, cultural, administrative, etc.) and conditions of travel on the public lands, including motorized, mechanized, and non-motorized/mechanized uses.
- If you select a limited area designation in the RMP you should identify the designated routes and modes of travel. This requires establishing a process for selecting specific roads, primitive roads and trails based on achieving the targeted goals and objectives within the limited area or sub-area and specifying limitation(s) placed on use. The RMP will include a map of the roads, primitive roads and trails open and available in each area.
  - Design a travel system with RMP and transportation network goals in mind rather than just choosing from inherited roads, primitive roads and trails. Instead of a decision-making process to only decide which individual routes should be closed or left open, design a travel system with a desired goal of sustainable routes that meet patrons' needs (i.e. loops) and varying levels of difficulty. Also, consider a broader range of management options that include reroutes, reconstruction or new construction, as well as closures. These management considerations are an integral part of developing a quality travel system.
  - Ensure that travel management decisions facilitate attainment of management objectives and maintain prescribed setting character—which is also essential to achieving Benefits-Based Management objectives.

- If complexity, controversy, or incomplete data make it impossible to complete the selection of a road and trail network for any area designated as limited within reasonable timeframes or budget availability, the BLM will perform the selection process for all limited areas that can be completed. For any limited area or sub-area that cannot be completed in the RMP, the BLM will produce a schedule to complete the limited area or sub-area road and trail selection process. Normally, this process should **not exceed** five years.
- “Limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails” designations should be used only as an interim measure prior to your next scheduled RMP revision. Where the Field Offices choose an **interim** designation of “limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails”, a map showing the existing travel and transportation network is required.
  - An inventory and map of roads, primitive roads and trails is necessary to assess and evaluate the need for individual routes as part of the travel and transportation network.
  - Without baseline inventory the Field Offices will not be able to confirm and document when new routes have been created or adequately monitor resource conditions. Baseline inventory maps are essential to effectively respond to the issue of user created route proliferation.
  - Inventory and baseline data is needed to provide supporting rationale to justify management actions such as closures and rehabilitation of routes created after the interim designation is made.
  - The BLM needs to provide the public clear and consistent information regarding access opportunities and provide a map showing the location of existing roads, primitive roads and trails that are available for public use and access.
- It will be Colorado BLM policy to restrict all OHV use within limited designations to designated routes or areas in the RMP revision.
- LUP decisions that address road and trail access, open play areas and closed areas will be incorporated into every RMP to ensure public and resource needs are met. The RMP will include a map of the roads, primitive roads and trails open and available in each area.
- Open areas will be limited to a size that can be realistically managed and geographically identifiable but large enough in size to offer a high quality motorized riding/driving opportunity for participants. Expansive open areas allowing cross-country travel, without a corresponding and identified user need/demand, will not be designated in RMP revisions or new travel management plans.
- There will be no motorized cross-country travel in areas designated as limited or closed. This policy is consistent with the policies of most field offices and National Forests in Colorado. Exceptions for motorized cross-country travel can be included within the terms and conditions of a lease, permit or by separate written authorization.
- RMP revisions should identify and designate spur roads and other routes that lead to significant and appropriate sites for camping and day use. If needed, RMP revisions may include the limited use of motor vehicles within a specified distance of specific

designated routes, and if appropriate within a specified time period. This is consistent with the policies of the United States Forest Service OHV Rule.

- Changes in route designations and adding new routes or closures in the limited areas may be made under activity level plans or with site-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis.
- Development of Supplement Rules should be done concurrently between the Recreation Staff and the Law Enforcement Officers so that when the Record Of Decision is signed, implementation and enforcement of the decisions can be timely.
- Focus on problem areas first. Field offices know and have identified where their problem areas are and should focus on developing travel plans and their implementation there first. This should be accomplished in advance of RMP revisions when necessary.

**Time Frame:** This Instruction Memorandum is effective immediately.

**Budget Impact:** Each field office should identify their annual budgetary needs for implementing OHV designation decisions through the development of Program Target Allocations, Annual Work Plans and through the Bureau's Budget Planning System (BPS), as appropriate. Additionally, each field office should address the costs of necessary signing, travel map preparation and distribution, information kiosks, brochure preparation and printing, road closures, public education, and route monitoring.

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Signed by:  
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2 Attachments:

- 1 – 43 Code of Federal Regulations 8342.1 (1p)
- 2 – H-1601-1, Land Use Planning Handbook – Appendix C, Section D (3pp)